



MONTGOMERY COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION

Public Meeting of February 18, 2014

Minutes

IN ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners:	Kenita Barrow, Chair Mark L. Greenblatt, Vice-Chair Claudia Herbert Joe Kale
Staff Member:	Robert Cobb, Counsel Erin Chu, Program Manager I

- Item 1. The meeting was called to order at 7:20 p.m.
- Item 2. Kenita Barrow welcomed new commissioners Claudia Herbert and Joe Kale.
- Item 3. The minutes from the 1/14/14 meeting were approved with minor editing.
- Item 4. Robert Cobb discussed the status of the financial disclosure related matters:
 - The current filing season is proceeding well with 692 filers having completed financial disclosure forms already.
 - Cobb updated the Commission on the filing of financial disclosure reports by candidates. Commission staff had worked with the Board of Elections to issue a joint press release concerning the filing obligations of candidates who are public financial disclosure filers. Also, the Commission has posted information about candidate filing requirements on the Commission's website. And, finally, Commission staff has been in close contact with the Council Administrator about the filing obligations of incumbent Council members.
 - Cobb indicated that a meeting regarding draft financial disclosure legislation with State Ethics Commission officials and the County Attorney and Legislative Counsel was set for Monday February 24. The objective of the meeting is to

obtain general agreement on draft legislation concerning financial disclosure in Montgomery County.

Item 5. Cobb provided a status report on lobbying registration for 2014 (62 to date) and activity reports for 2013. In particular, he noted that the new lobbying registration and reporting system, as administered by Erin Chu, had resulted in 100% compliance for the filing of semi-annual activity reports for 2013. Prior to the implementation of the new system, there was no assurance that activity reports were being filed as required. Due to the ease of management of data in the new system, the Ethics Commission began fulfilling a requirement of the Public Ethics Law to notify public employees that their names had been identified as being the recipient of gifts from a registered lobbyist. The object of the law was to provide an opportunity to any public employee to take exception to their being identified as a gift recipient from a lobbyist. Cobb indicated that many individuals so notified were concerned about their name appearing in the lobbying reports and suggested that they would no longer attend events including charitable events where attendance might result in their names being reported as gift recipients.

Item 6. Cobb indicated that a meeting was set with the Office of Human Resources for February 27 regarding orientation training for new employees.

Item 7. A draft of the 2013 annual report was discussed. Mr. Greenblatt suggested that Cobb add a paragraph that developed the scope of authority of the Ethics Commission. Cobb is to draft the additional paragraph and recirculate the draft annual report.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20.

Respectfully Submitted,



Robert Cobb
Counsel